

*Research Article*

# The Concept of Evil in African Communities: The Case of the Yoruba, Akan and Igbo People

**ABSTRACT**

Traditionally, Africans see themselves as each other's keeper, and that is the main reason for the concern shown towards each other and the general wellbeing of all in society. Africans do not talk about individualism because it contradicts the traditional African understanding of family, traditional practices, beliefs and values that seek to create a society that will be free from the effect of evil. Despite this communal co-existence to create a peaceful society, there are violations of the moral order through the employment of mystical powers to harm others. The belief in the presence of mystical powers that work against the progress of others has influenced the cultural, religious and daily lives of the people, bringing into question the role of the Supreme Being in all these. The use of these mystical powers to impede people's wellbeing is unacceptable in African thought. The paper discusses metaphysics and contemporary philosophy about the problem of evil and how it influences human actions. It has also conceptually and comparatively explored the notion of evil in Akan, Yoruba and Igbo communities within the African ethos. Again, it seeks to give exposition on some African notions of evil, from the understanding that evil is not the creation of God but results from the actions of humanity. The proposition of this paper is that most African communities do not perceive the existence of evil as a sufficient reason to discredit the existence of God, the Supreme Being.

**Keywords:** Evil and Community

**INTRODUCTION**

Evil is perceived in diverse ways in many different African societies. It is explained in the *Longman's Dictionary* as something which is cruel, morally wrong or unpleasant and always harmful by causing loss and suffering.<sup>2</sup> According to Calder Todd, there are different dimensions of evil; demonic evil (evil performed to harm others), instrumental evil (evil that occur to carry out other purposes), idealistic evil (evil justified by greater cause) and stupid evil (evil based on human incompetence).<sup>3</sup> Evil in general therefore, is "any experience that is injurious, painful, hurtful, regretful or calamitous which impedes the achievement of goals, ideals, happiness or general well-being" and "the essence of evil...consists in doing harm to others."<sup>4</sup>

The concept of good and bad (or evil), right and wrong, features prominently in African moral thought. The philosophical problem of evil is critical and intentional effort to resolve the several challenges and responses put forward by theists, to explain the problem of evil, which does not affect God's omnipotent and benevolent attributes.<sup>5</sup> According to Levi Asher, there are several kinds of evil that affect humanity: be it religious or spiritual evil, moral or social evil as

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*Manuscript*

Received 12th December 2019,

Accepted 16th March 2020,

Published online 2nd April 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 537

<sup>3</sup> Calder Todd, *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, The Concept of Evil*. (Stanford University: Focus Publishing, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Kola Abimbola, *Yoruba Culture: A Philosophical Account*. (Birmingham: Iroko Academic Publishers, 1982), 27-30.

<sup>5</sup> John Hick, *Philosophy of Religion*. (California; Prentice Hall of India, 1992), 40.

well as physical or natural evil.<sup>6</sup> He further asserts that religious or spiritual evil is the opposite of righteousness which is sin, and may be in the heart of human being, without any act of transgression by the person. Moral or social evil is actions which contravenes the norms of society, while physical or natural evil are those inflicted on the human person by environmental catastrophe or through the use of mystical powers on another person.<sup>7</sup> Evil in general for Kwame Gyekye, is any experience that is injurious, painful, hurtful, regretful or calamitous which impedes or obstructs the achievements, goals and the general wellbeing of a person.<sup>8</sup>

Community however has to do with a group of people who live in the same area and have the same interest and religion.<sup>9</sup> Again it is about people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in communal actions within a given geographical location or setting.<sup>10</sup>

The African according to Blessing Agidigbi, sees morality not as an arbitrary creation of the gods or anybody, but rather as something demanded by the very nature of things.<sup>11</sup> God in African traditional thought is therefore concerned about morality, and the welfare of humanity. Many who venture to explain the concept of African thought cannot avoid relating myths to the origin of evil and death. Even though God is the ultimately judge of human actions and condition, sin committed from the comprehension of traditional world view cannot be against God, however evil and sin are realities in African thought.

### The Concept of evil among the Yoruba People

Blessing Agidigbi opines that Yoruba philosophy takes *Esu* as the progenitor of evil who works through chaos, and is capable of doing evil, but do not equate it to Christian thought of Satan.<sup>12</sup> *Esu* is known or conceived to be one of the three primordial divinities, and had always existed with *Olodumare*, the Yoruba highest deity.<sup>13</sup> *Esu* is a natural element who is not inherently evil, but a mediator between all entities and forces of both the right and left divide, with the ability to make ones sacrifices acceptable to the highest deity or not. For Awolalu Omosade and Dopanu Adelumo, *Esu* always work in favour of any man depending on the consideration given to him along his line of duty.<sup>14</sup> *Esu* is not a rival of *Olodumare* (God), but works in tandem with him to ensure peace and order in the universe.<sup>15</sup> *Esu* is capable of doing well, even though he is held responsible for the occurrence of evil against other human beings.<sup>16</sup>

Evil does not necessarily have a religious connotation among the Yoruba thought but a matter of morality, therefore evil cannot be blamed on God. In the opinion of Abiodun Oladele, witchcraft is a form of evil recognized by Africans which employs mystical forces to harm one's neighbour, and this force is a typical example of evil.<sup>17</sup> For him the various dimensions of evil are natural, spiritual, moral, social, psychological, and intellectual evils, but are rarely made among the Yoruba.<sup>18</sup> It means that the moral perspective of evil for Sophia Oluwole, is more dominant and quite pragmatic in African cultural understanding. Evil, is always attached to a wrong doer who is ultimately a human person, except in natural catastrophe.<sup>19</sup> This strengthens the assertion that evil is done by human agents and all blame should be directed to human beings.

John Mbiti agrees with Sophia Oluwole with respect to the mystical application of witchcraft by stating that: "Mystical power is neither good nor evil in itself, but they become evil when used maliciously by some individuals".<sup>20</sup> This view makes evil independent and external, such that it cannot act on its own but must be employed by human or spiritual agents.

Many African societies maintain that God is not responsible for the creation of evil nor should he be blamed for it in any degree or circumstance.<sup>21</sup> The Yoruba worldview is that evil does not emanate from one source but from various supernatural forces known as the *Ajogun*; which forces are scattered around the cosmos.<sup>22</sup> This view

<sup>6</sup> Levi Asher, *Philosophy Weekend: The Four Types of Evil*. July 17th, 2010, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Hick. *Philosophy of Religion*, 45.

<sup>8</sup> Kwame Gyekye, "The Perspective of Evil; An Akan Concept of a Person". *Introduction Polycarp Ikuenobe*, 55.

<sup>9</sup> Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 307.

<sup>10</sup> Kathleen MacQueen (et.al.), "What is Community? An Evidence-Based Definition for Participatory Public Health". *Journal of Public Health*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>, 2. Assessed 4/12/2019

<sup>11</sup> Blessing Agidigbi, *An introductory reading in African philosophy*. (Ekpoma: Inno Prints, 2001), 7

<sup>12</sup> Agidigbi, *An introductory reading in African Philosophy*, 4.

<sup>13</sup> Agidigbi, *An introductory reading in African Philosophy*, 6-8.

<sup>14</sup> Omosade Awolalu and Dopanu Adelumo, *West African Traditional Religion*. (Ibadan: Onibonjo Press, 1979), 78-79.

<sup>15</sup> Omosade and Adelumo, *West African Traditional Religion*, 80.

<sup>16</sup> John Bewaji, "Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief and the Theistic Problem of Evil". *African Studies Quarterly*, 1 Volume 2, Issue 1, 1998, <http://www.africa.edu>, 7-8, Assessed 5/1/2020

<sup>17</sup> Abiodun Oladel, "The nature of evil and human wickedness in traditional African thought: Further Reflections on the Philosophical Problem of evil". October 2009, 2-4, <http://lumina.hnu.edu.ph>. Assessed 6/01/2020

<sup>18</sup> Oladele, "The nature of evil and human wickedness in traditional African thought", 4

<sup>19</sup> Sophia Oluwole, "African Traditional Thought", in *Journal of Philosophy and Development*, no. 1, vol. 1, 1995, 19.

<sup>20</sup> John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*. (London: Heinemann, 1969), 34.

<sup>21</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 43.

<sup>22</sup> Akinseye Akinwande, *The Problem of Evil: Philosophical and Religious Approaches*. (Ago-Iwoye: NASR, 2005), 10.

of the Yoruba absolves God of any complicity in the problem of evil, and pushes the blame to humans. In cases of natural disaster like earthquake, it can be argued from the above that most natural happenings result from human earlier actions, such as depletion of the ozone layer. It is people who are evil or sinful who are aided by invisible and natural forces, because such people entertain bad intentions.<sup>23</sup>

The above understanding of evil has implications for the old philosophical Yoruba notion of evil, that absolves God of any complicity in the problem of evil. To further buttress the African thought that God has nothing to do with evil stress that there is no need to offer sacrifice to God for evil happenings.<sup>23</sup> The indigenous Yoruba asserts that evil is entirely a human doing, with all coming out of human discretion and actions. Yoruba notion of evil therefore place both the existence and eradication of evil firmly on the shoulders of humanity. Hades and 'Ifa' cannot be equated with the biblical Satan because he is not malevolent, but also benevolent, therefore there is dialectical and not diametrical relationship between good and evil in Yoruba thought.<sup>24</sup>

According to Kola Abimbola, *Esu* is not an evil being but a neutral element who is neither good nor bad, but conceived as diametrically opposed to *Olodumare* (God) and can work in favour of any person, depending on the consideration given to the individual.<sup>25</sup> This explains why it is always advisable that whenever sacrifices are offered, the portion of *Esu* must be set aside.<sup>26</sup> When human beings want to perpetrate evil against other human beings, *Esu* is required by *Olodumare* to wreak havoc upon potential evil doers because it can do good and evil.

For the Yoruba, evil is as real and necessary as existence itself, hence their famous saying *tibi tire la da ile aye ibi* (the world is created with both good and evil).<sup>27</sup> The existence of evil and good is necessary and does not negate the existence of a supernatural entity. The Yoruba hold the belief that the operation of the world is predicated on the dialectics of *ire* and *ibi* (goodness and evil).<sup>28</sup> In Yoruba worldview, there are different kinds of evil but they are all caused by humans who can do evil both naturally and supernaturally. For the Yoruba, no single entity can be held responsible for the occurrence of evil. The cosmological explanation and personification of evil by the Yoruba absolves God of any complicity in the problem of evil but put the blame squarely at the doorsteps of humans.

The fundamental question to ask at this point is whether the concept of evil in Yoruba thought is largely shared by other indigenous African communities? In order to answer this question, the Akan and Igbo perspective shall be explored.

### The Akan concept of Evil

God cannot be indifferent to human welfare because he is a good God who ensures that justice is done by rewarding virtues and punishing vices through the agency of the gods who serve him.<sup>29</sup> The Akan understanding of evil is that it is caused by deities who are the lesser spirits.<sup>30</sup> There are two main sources of evil in Akan thought; these are the deities and spirits deities which were created by God. Evil is conceived in terms of not only the attributes of the deities and spirits.<sup>31</sup> In Akan religious thought and cosmology, *Onyame* (God) is conceived as omnipotent, wholly good, and that evil is not the creation of God.<sup>32</sup>

According to Abrefa Busia, the Supreme Being of the African is the creator and the source of life, but between the Supreme Being and human beings lies many powers and principalities which are good and bad, and these account for the strange happenings in this world.<sup>33</sup> The question then is, why should a wholly good God create a being that embodies in itself both good and evil powers in disposition? The answer is that they are not the creation of God but the operations of independent free will of spirits, and though God could have intervened in their evil operations, doing so would have disrupted the free will with which God endowed them.<sup>34</sup> The other source of evil according to Akan thought is that human will comes from a person's character, since character determines the nature of human actions. Bad character gives rise to evil actions, and good character gives rise to good actions. A person with bad character thinks evil and it is such evil thoughts that translates into morally evil actions. God is good, but it is character from which evil proceeds; it is one's own making and that whatever one's character is or will be is one's responsibility and not God's. Jonathan Kuwornu-Adjaottor is of the opinion that God is obliged to persuade every individual to act in the best

<sup>23</sup> Oluwole, "African Traditional Thought", 2

<sup>24</sup> Godwin Sogolo, *Foundations of African Philosophy: A Definitive Analysis of Conceptual issues in African Thought*. (Ibadan: University Press, 1993), 50.

<sup>25</sup> Abimbola, *Yoruba Culture: A Philosophical Account*, 24.

<sup>26</sup> Abimbola, *Yoruba Culture: A Philosophical account*, 37

<sup>27</sup> Awolalu Omosade and Dopamu Adelumo, *West African Traditional Religion*. (Ibadan: Onibonjo Press Ltd., 1979), 84.

<sup>28</sup> Omosade and Adelumo, *West African Traditional Religion*, 92

<sup>29</sup> Agidigbi, *An introductory reading in African philosophy*, 20

<sup>30</sup> Gyekye, "The Perspective of Evil; An Akan Perspective", 55

<sup>31</sup> Hasskei Majeed, "God and the Demon in Cartesian and Akan Philosophies: A comparative analysis", *Journal of Religious Studies, Ilorin* vol.6 No. 2, 2016, 80-81

<sup>32</sup> Majeed, "God and the Demon in Cartesian and Akan Philosophies: A comparative analysis", 85

<sup>33</sup> Kofi Abrefa Busia, *The African World View: A Comparative Approach in Cultural Adaptations within Modern Africa*. (New York: Columbia Univ. Teachers College Press, 1972), 23.

<sup>34</sup> Mathew Izibili, "African Traditional Approach to the problems of Evil in the World," 11-15.

possible manner, however there is no guarantee that God's benevolent persuasion will lead to a favourable outcome.<sup>35</sup> The good God always acts for the best interest for creation, but the coercing force is not able to ensure that the divine will is exercised. The conception of the source of moral evil in humans has two dimensions which are that God did not create evil, but evil comes from human actions and God is not the cause of evil, but it comes from our own thinking and choices.

God is not the author of evil, but evil comes from human conscience and character which enables them to see the difference between good and evil since "Man is not a beast to fail to distinguish between good and evil".<sup>36</sup> The human being as the head of all creation was created a moral agent, gifted with the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. The comparison between the human being and beast is intended as a distinction between moral sense on one hand, with rational and irrational on the other. Our moral sense corrects the moral thinking, therefore evil stems from our inability to exercise either moral sense or our moral will. Character determines the nature of our actions therefore bad character give rise to evil actions and good character give rise to good actions. Thus, a person with bad character thinks evil, and it is such evil thoughts that translate into morally evil actions. The basic assumption or argument of the Akan thinkers on the concept of evil is generally that God does not like evil and hence did not create it.<sup>37</sup> Evil in the Akan thought therefore proceeds from the human being's character, conscience, desires and thoughts, as well as from the exercise of one's own free will.<sup>38</sup>

The general nature of destiny allows for the concept of human freedom of choice within the context of human action. Thus, the view of the human source of moral evil appears to stem from a set of related concepts in the Akan metaphysical system. The omnipotent and wholly good God did not create humans such that they can always chose the good and avoid evil. God does not intervene when the human uses the freedom to do evil instead of good, since if God had intervened, the human would have acted in a determined way without any choice.<sup>39</sup> Such a situation would have run God counter to the general nature of the concept of destiny and the notion of human action as held by Akan thinkers.<sup>40</sup> Without endowing the human the right of thought, it would have made the human irrational and without the ability to make a choice.

The Akan thought would rather have humankind endowed with rationality and conscience, than to have him or her fashioned to behave like a beast, hence God's provision of rationality and freedom of the will and choice is justified.<sup>41</sup> If human debase this provision knowing that this choice brings evil in its wake, then it is the human and not the creator who should be held responsible for wrongful acts. A question to ask at this point is, what would have been the case if God made the human being to use his or her rationality to always choose the good, and would such human be free under such circumstance? The answer is no, since the choice of the good would have been predetermined and no choice would ever exist.

Evil in Akan thought is ultimately the result of the exercise of human freedom of choice and will, and with this a person has been endowed with by the Creator. One of the manifestations of this evil is witchcraft, which is a form of evil recognized by the Akan to be employed as a mystical force to harm one's neighbour. It is also a form of power that somebody can employ to affect another person or make someone else do what she or he wants without consent or awareness of the other.<sup>42</sup> There are however some who do not see witchcraft as evil, and to such people witchcraft becomes evil only when the person decides to use such powers negatively.<sup>43</sup> This strengthens the assertion that evil is done by human agents, and all blames should be directed to human beings, but not God. John Mbiti supports this assertion with the view that mystical power in itself is neither good nor evil, but when used maliciously by some individuals it is then experienced as evil.<sup>44</sup> The Akan belief maintain that God is not responsible for the creation of evil nor should be blamed for it in any way or circumstances. The content of evil is seen as originating from human associated with spiritual beings other than God who were created good but later turned against God and began to do evil.<sup>45</sup> Evil is therefore always attached to a wrong-doer who is a human person, except in natural catastrophes. In cases of natural disasters like earthquake, it can be argued that most natural disasters happen as a result of the human's earlier actions, having an imprint of his or actions, such as the depletion of the ozone layer through deforestation and air

<sup>35</sup> Jonathan Kuwornu-Adjaottor, "God and the Suffering of his People". *Journal of Science and Technology (Ghana)* vol.33, 2013/11/15,114-120. Assessed 13/9/201.

<sup>36</sup> Omosade Awolalu, "Sin and its Removal in African Traditional Religion". *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* vol.44, No.2, Jun. 1976, 275-287: Oxford University Press.

<sup>37</sup> Kwasi Wiredu, *Cultural Universals and Particulars; An African Perspective*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press,1996),36.

<sup>38</sup> Kwame Gyekye, *African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*. (Norris: Temple University Press,1995),113.

<sup>39</sup> Wiredu, *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective*,46.

<sup>40</sup> Kofi Abrefa Busia, *The African World View; A Comparative Approach in Cultural Adaptations within Modern Africa*,43.

<sup>41</sup> Abrefa Busia, *The African World View: A Comparative Approach in Cultural Adaptations within Modern Africa*,53.

<sup>42</sup> Hasskei Majeed, "God and the Demon in Cartesian and Akan Philosophies",98

<sup>43</sup> Uzodinma Nwala, *Igbo Philosophy*. (Lagos: Lantern Books, 1985), 16.

<sup>44</sup> John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*. (London: Heineman,.1969), 19.

<sup>45</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 29.

pollution.<sup>46</sup>

The sense here is that evil does not and cannot exist in the human experience except as perceived in people who are evil or sinful, whether they were aided by invisible and natural forces. Even when it is claimed that invisible forces cause humans to do evil, it is because such people entertain bad intentions and utter evil words or engage in wrong deeds, and by this human become incarnation of evil powers or forces and not God.<sup>47</sup>

### The Igbo notion of Evil

The metaphysical problem of evil, can be meaningfully discussed within the Igbo cosmological thought where God is viewed as *Okike* (creator), who is essentially good in himself and that his creation is also intrinsically good.<sup>48</sup> Emmanuel Edeh is of the opinion that evil is something external to God and it is the consequences of moral evil committed by human beings, and the upholders of this view point to the myth of God's withdrawal.<sup>49</sup> The first view in his opinion states that the human being is solely accountable for the evil in the world; the second speaks of a personal god and destiny; while the third school of thought combines the two views together as being responsible for the evil in the world.<sup>50</sup>

The Igbo belief is that the created universe is controlled by Chukwu-Okike (creator), therefore the human being is at the centre of this creation and endowed with freedom with attendant responsibilities.<sup>51</sup> Thus, the Igbo believe that, evil is the function of the human being, who is at the centre of God's creation. This view consolidates the African notion of evil that God can never be the possible cause of evil in the world.<sup>52</sup> Evil is not linked directly to the human being, but with the personal god of each human being and destiny which are responsible for the mistakes in life. The belief here according to Igbo Benson is that the Supreme Being assigns *Chi* (a personal god) to an individual, whose *Chi* brings to him or her all the good and sometimes bad fortunes.<sup>54</sup> He further asserts that despite the criticism of the ambiguity or the equivocal nature of the concept of *Chi*, the traditional Igbo believes that God does not commit evil against his creation.<sup>55</sup> They also believe that any misfortune or evil suffered by a human being is interpreted as punishment for his or her misbehaviour in his present or previous life. This holds because the Igbo believes that the actions of human beings have consequences whether in this life or the next, not only on those who commit them but on those who live after them.<sup>56</sup> Uzodinma Nwala contend that evil in the world does not detract God from the goodness and omnipotence of his Divinity.<sup>57</sup> God transcends the moral and ontological orders, while being the ultimate source and guarantor, without any of his essential characteristics being compromised.<sup>58</sup>

Many modern Igbo scholars conceive evil in the world as being contingent upon the actions of human beings and the spirits, thus, absolving God of any involvement or blame in the problem of evil.<sup>59</sup> The actions of human beings avail himself or herself for evil influence and attack. For Oguejio Okafor, the apparent evil in the world and imperfection in the world are not intrinsic but rather the negation of the perfect cosmic order mainly caused by the actions of human beings and spirits.<sup>60</sup> God cannot be the cause of evil, and blame the human being and the spirits for the existence of evil; with the causative factors being evil spirits, the gods and human beings.<sup>61</sup> This view does not sacrifice or detract from the goodness and omnipotence of God who is also considered as a Supremely Being and all-powerful.

### CONCLUSION

There are diverse philosophical thoughts about the problem of evil which manifest in human affairs, thereby bringing suffering and pain. For the Yoruba, *Esu* which is a spirirual agent has existed with *Olodumare*, the Supreme Being who is inherently good. In Yoruba thought, moral evil is more dominant, and evil comes as a result of wrong actions by human, except for natural disasters. Mystical powers are not evil in themselves but becomes evil when used by human

<sup>46</sup> Daniel Kasomo, "An investigation of sin and evil in African Cosmology," *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 1, 2009, 145-150.

<sup>47</sup> Kasomo, *An investigation of sin and evil in African Cosmology*, 152-155.

<sup>48</sup> Charles Okeke, "Judeo-Igbo Traditional Religious Conception of sin: Socio- Religious Implications on Igbo Society". *Department of Christian Religious Studies*, College of Education, Nsugbe, 127

<sup>49</sup> Emmanuel Edeh, *Towards Igbo Metaphysics*. (Chicago: Loyola University Press. 1985), 40.

<sup>50</sup> Edeh, *Towards Igbo Metaphysics*, 49-50

<sup>51</sup> Uzodinma Nwala, *Igbo Philosophy*, (Lagos: Lantern Books. 1985), 16.

<sup>52</sup> Emmanuel Ogunyemi, *The Philosophy of Religion*. (Ibadan: Onibonjo, 1985), 43.

<sup>53</sup> Ogunyemi, *The Philosophy of Religion*, 49.

<sup>54</sup> Benson Igboin, *An African Reflection on the Best Possible World*. (Amawbia: Lumos, 2006), 56.

<sup>55</sup> Igboin, *An African Reflection on the Best possible world*, 61.

<sup>56</sup> Edeh, *Towards Igbo Metaphysics*, 62.

<sup>57</sup> Nwala, *Igbo Philosophy*, 18

<sup>58</sup> Nwala, *Igbo Philosophy*, 19

<sup>59</sup> Nwala, *Igbo Philosophy*, 28

<sup>60</sup> Oguejio Okafor, *Igbo Philosophy of Law*, (Enugu: Fourth Dimensional Publishing Co. Ltd. 1992), 53.

<sup>61</sup> Celestine Mbaegbu, "The Paradox of Evil and the Good God: The Igbo Perspective". *Journal of Religion and Human Relations*. Vol 1, No 2 (2009), 20

agents to inflict pain on another. Evil therefore do not act on its own unless employed by human or spiritual agents, and it happens when people entertain bad intentions. Natural disasters are the result of human earlier actions according to the Yoruba.

For the Akans, God is good and seeks human welfare by ensuring that justice is done, virtues rewarded while vices are punished through the agencies of the gods who are servants. Between the Supreme Being and human lies many powers and principalities who are both good and bad. These are those who account for the strange happenings in the world. Evil is as a result of the exercise of freewill of human, who has been endowed by those powers God. Evil proceeds from human character, conscience and choices. Bad character leads to bad actions, but good character leads to good actions.

Igbo conceive God as good and creation as intrinsically good, therefore evil is caused by human personal god and destiny, as well as the combination of the two. The Supreme Being has assigned a personal god to every human, and they bring good and bad fortune. Evil is caused by personal god of each human being as punishment for bad actions in the present or previous behaviour. Consequences of evil is therefore not only on those present, but on generations to come. The overall deduction from the Yoruba, Akan and Igbo conception of evil is that, it emanates from human action as a result of wrong choices. This finds expression in the saying that if the last tree dies (as a result of human destructive actions, then) the last human will also die. All these dispel the notion that it is God and spirits that visit evil on humanity, which present human as innocent and being responsibility for the misfortunes and disasters that befall humanity. All the three African communities and their philosophical thoughts affirm that God, the Supreme Being and his creation are inherently good, and evil is not the creation of a good God, but humanity.

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